

PAT LYNCH

(Joe Haslem)

Tape #45

Joe Haslem is interviewed by Mike Brown, 1 September 1977
Side Two, Fast-forward to 7.5 minutes

(Joe is discussing Pat Lynch.)

Joe Haslem (Joe): Pat said they give him one of their knives to go out and kill this Portuguese, and Pat said to him, "Now you run, you run like hell." He killed some little wild animal or a snake or a bird or something and he come in with blood all over him. They thought he was "mucho grande" so they decided they wouldn't kill him. So, they give him a red-headed native, kind of a breed was there. And Pat says he guessed maybe some other red-haired Irishman had been there before him and had this red-haired woman. And he had two boys out there out of this damn woman.

He stayed there for several years, then he jumped a boat coming to North America and he come into New Orleans and he got on a river boat and was going up the damn river. He got in a row there and he hit another fellow over the head with something. But he jumped off and he escaped there and then he made his way into the Southwest over into Arizona and New Mexico.

He hung out in there until the Civil War come on and then he joined the Southwest Cavalry there. There's how he got fouled up, enlisted under the name of Pat Lynch, but his name was James Cooper. He finally, after years and years and years, somehow the old man Bassett, Queen Ann's and George's dad, and Old Man Barnes, they worked on him and had him get a pension. That's the reason they caught up on his name, using two or three names.

The old fellow, in later years, kind of went nutty. I guess things he had done. He was kind of a spiritualist, he had two spirits and maybe one was after his red-headed woman. The red-headed was Puss and the dark one was Dreyfuss, and down that canyon you hear the echo. He'd come here and eat with us, then when he got through, he would always take some for Puss and Dreyfuss.

Mike Brown (MB): Puss and Dreyfuss.

Joe: Puss and Dreyfuss. Puss was the red-headed one and Dreyfuss was the dark one.

MB: Was he a hermit?

Joe: Oh, no. Hell no. He would camp alone a lot because he was so damn dirty nobody would stay with him. He just got filthy, you know. From the time of the turn of the century, great place for the fellows to go down and winter. The climate was mild down in there. He would come out and he'd stay with fellows.

These Daniels' that was up here, they was in there before Pat come here on that ranch in

that country. They used to run cattle over there. They would take food in there and those peach trees that old Pat had planted over there, he took peach pits from the Daniels' Ranch over there and planted. Then there was fish that was in this Cub Creek, too, that Daniels' brought them out of Pool Creek. There used to be a lot of little fish in there that come up the river. After Chews went to irrigate, the water wouldn't go down, they just died out.

He would stay alone. Them cow outfits, they would give him beef or he would come up and hang around their roundup for a day or so and fill up. He was so damn dirty nobody would stay with him. One time old Bill Oakley and Luke Stored was camped out there, had a dry camp, they were saving their water. Old Pat come a-riding in and their water was left in their wash station to wash their hands in next time. Old Pat had been riding all morning. Old Bill said, "Get down, Pat, and have some dinner." He was thirsty and stepped off his horse and went over and picked up that old wash dish and drank it. Bill said, "God Almighty, Pat, don't drink that, I washed my hands in it." He said, "Oh, Willy, what won't fatten will help fill up."

After he got old, he was poor and everything. He couldn't see his shoes or anything. He had some awfully good horses and he couldn't get a deer or anything. He would run a bunch of horses in a corral and get in there and rope 'em and cut their throat and eat the horse. He lived on horse meat chiefly.

MB: He did?

Joe: Oh yes. He'd kill a horse quicker than he would a deer because it was easier to get to. Then after Chews come in 1910, Old Lady Chew used to practically keep him. She always raised a good garden and he was hell for garden stuff. He would come out here and pack two horses with cabbage. Imagine two horses! Have a change of diet, I guess. Maybe too much meat, ya know.

MB: Where about was he on the river?

Joe: Right there. His main hole was right down on the river there on Pool Creek. You've been in there, have ya?

MB: Is that Echo Park?

Joe: Uh-huh. Mostly there, that little bottom on the river there. He had a cave there. He had a, what in the hell did that note read? I don't know. It just tells that that belonged to him. He just kind of drifted up and down that canyon. In later years, they took him off up there in Lily Park and a family lived there, Bakers. They kept him there. We was going out [after] some cattle one fall, me and old Frank Bourdette, and Bourdette had rode down the river to look out for a water hole to see if we could get any there and water that string of cattle. He come back and said, "Old Pat's down there, let's go down and see him." They had the old fellow tied up to one of these old iron bedsteads, ya know. He kept wanting to get away, to go down the river. He said, "Just throw me in the river and I'll go home." He died shortly after; he's buried right there where the Snake River hits the Bear. They haven't moved him. They'll have to because that river was cutting pretty much in that sand there. Maybe they've changed that now.

MB: Where is that?

Joe: Right into Lily Park there.

MB: That's here in Utah?

Joe: No, no. That's on the Colorado side. It's by the junction. There was kind of a little graveyard there with three or four buried there. But old Pat was the closest to the river there.

MB: Is the grave marked?

Joe: Yes. Pat Lynch.

MB: It's right by the [river]; it wouldn't be hard to find them.

Joe: No, right by the junction, just a little bit to the east of where the Snake River comes into the Yampa River. I'm sure they've got it marked. I think the road goes right by it now.

MB: Where the Snake comes into the Yampa?

Joe: Yes. Pat had some good horses. Old Pat, when he first came to the country here, he wintered out there where Sowards' place is out there, before you get to the Steinaker Reservoir. He was here two or three years and then he went. They said he went back down to Arizona. He was gone about three years, and he come back with a hell of a good bunch of horses. Awfully good horses. Those were Pat Lynch horses. Fact of the matter, I had to lasso that strain of Pat Lynch horses. They were awful good horses.

MB: You say he picked them up in Arizona?

Joe: Yeah, he had had them down there. He'd left them there, I guess, when he came up here. But he went back and got them and he came through. There was quite a string of mares, a hell of a good stud. That's what Marcus Jensen and these old fellows say. I wouldn't know that, but I knew he had some good horses, awful good horses. They were a breeding-type of horses.

MB: Another character I've been interested in is Pete Dillman. Did you know him?

Joe: Yes. I guess he was quite a little tough character. He was a rugged old devil. He used to pack the mail for Burtons here when they had the mail contract from Rock Springs. It was nothing for him to walk across Diamond Mountain there on snowshoes. He's got a grandson over on the reservation, George Huston.

MB: George Houston?

Joe: Um hum. Lives out in Roosevelt.

MB: Did you know Pete well?

Joe: Oh God! He used to come around all the time selling apples. Hell, yes. Then he was game warden. He had him an apple orchard right north of Vernal there on North Vernal Avenue, right in there somewhere. Hell, he used to come around and always stay all night. He was kind of a friend of my dad and Old Man Thorne over here. He would have a wagon with a lantern and some hot rocks filled with straw to come peddling apples. He would always do that.

MB: Did you say Thorne lived around here?

Joe: The old man Thorne, across here.

MB: Now was this the photographer's father?

Joe: That was his father, yes. His grandfather lived north of Vernal, there, you know, where a lot of them haystacks are there. That's the old Thorne place. They said he was a character. He used to tan his own buckskin, wear buckskin clothes and jackets and he wouldn't take the hair off. He always wore the hair on the outside. They'd say, "What did you do that for?" He says, "Hell, that's the way the deer wear it." I don't remember him. I remember the old George.

I'll tell you a good one of old Pete Dillman. He got to be game warden. He was a snoopy old bastard. I guess he was a worse poacher in the world in his day, deer and fish. This Hugh Coltharp, he was a smart devil, but oh, how he did like to fish. He was a fisher, too. About the time that they put a control and made you get a license to fish, old Hugh knew what a good fishing hole was and everything. Then one spring just before the season opened, Hugh tied his horse and he went off up Ashley Creek, way off up there. He tied his horse up and was fishing down the creek, and old Hugh, he was catchin' fish. He happened to look up and seen old Pete a-crawling on his hands and knees on the other side of the creek, coming down on him, sneaking through that brush.

Hugh didn't do a damn thing but crawl out and went around on the other side and went way out around Old Pete. Old Pete had tied his horse where Hugh had tied his, see. They were out there twenty miles from town, twenty to twenty-five. Hugh didn't do a damn thing but get on his horse and untie Old Pete's and brought him to town and left Old Pete up there afoot, see. Brought Old Pete's horse down to a livery stable and, I think, Old Ed Sumners run it, it was either Ed or Jim MacKnight. He says, "Say, I found Old Pete's horse up there. He must've got away from him. He'll be in here a day or two a-hunting him."

MB: What did Pete do?

Joe: He had to walk to town.

MB: I bet he was mad! Did he ever catch him?

Joe: No, he couldn't catch Hugh.

MB: That's a good one.

Joe: Hugh says, "Hell, Pete, I thought your horse got away from you. I just brought him to town to put in the livery stable."

MB: Helping him out.

Joe: This old Andy Strong. I guess he was a ding-a-ling. First fort man formed this K outfit. He worked for this old Charlie Pepper. This old Jew. Of course, most of them Jews, you know, and they still do, make a hell of a lot of money with butchering business. They get Cudahay and Armour and all them. This old Pepper come to Salt Lake and he was making a lot of money out there and had this old Andy Strong working for him out around Tintic and Bingham and them mining camps. And old Andy, he was a stealing beef and selling it to old Pepper.

They said one time, old Andy goes out with his old mule and one of them old mine shafts and went to tip his hides off in one of them old mine shafts and didn't have them untied and sent mules and all down there. Out here at the K Ranch, freighters used to go through and, not freighters but ambergants (immigrants?), and that was the only camp that's out there and old Andy would go out while they was hooking up. They always used to put their nose sacks and their hobbles and buckle them on their back-end gate rod. Andy would go along and unbuckle them and get on his horse and pull them down the road and pick up their stock.

Said it was in winter one time, he rode off down there at Ouray and he had a big fur overcoat and he put it down there at that rooming house. Forgot about his coat, got up the next morning to leave and seen that coat and he had stole it, put it in a sack and tied it on his saddle and he got way back here and damn near froze to death before he put on that coat, and he had his old overcoat.

MB: He stole his own overcoat. Were you ever on The Strip? Or was that before your time?

Joe: Hell, yes. I've been down to my dad's when he has camped there a lot of times. You bet. It run 'til plumb the opening of the reservation. Quite a little bit after. Always called it The Strip.

MB: Was that 1910, '11?

Joe: No, 1905. That's when they throwed the reservation open to settlement. Wasn't much done until about 1906. They drawed in them homesteaders, started to come in.

MB: You said this here was the old Burton place. I read somewhere that they built a fort.

Joe: They did. It was right up the riverbank there.

MB: Is any of it left?

Joe: No, not a bit of it. Oh, it wasn't much of a fort, hell.

MB: Well, this was during the Meeker scare.

Joe: Yeah, what few families was here, they had them come up. You see, this was the first ditch out here and they had trouble with these other ditches. There was just one or two. Burtons let them have their community garden right here and what few people there was in Jensen, they used to come up here and raise a garden right there back here of my house here. The Davises, and the Snyders, and a few of them. About ten to fifteen of them out there. The women used to come up there and they brought all the women and kids up there. But the men just went right on working.

MB: Do you remember when they dedicated that first bridge? I heard it was quite a celebration. Can you tell me anything about that?

Joe: Yeah, 1910. *[Note: This actually occurred in 1911.]* Yes it was. That was a big celebration. You see, there was a plank floor in there. They brought the troops over from Ft. Duchesne and they had a big barbecue, my dad and Harry Burton and Pard Dodds. They barbecued three beefs there, whole beef. They dug pits back in that sand.

There was quite a lot of placer mining going on at that time up the river here. They had a big dredge up here. They had a two to four boilers, four to five engines. There was a three-story building, and had dynamo and everything. They brought that dynamo and their power-down and had that bridge all lit up with electric lights and every cockeyed thing. Had a rodeo over there, no corrals, no chute.

Tell you the funny thing about it. Of course, those soldiers had a dance up there that night in the church house. We had a couple of characters down here. One was a justice of the peace, the other was a constable, see. Well, they goes up this dance, going to keep order on them soldiers—all cavalry troops. Of course, the military police come in, you know. And you know alls the two of them together. Them two damn police got up, was going to try to order them boys out of the hall, them two military police tried to take their guns off, you know. They said, "Hell, you crazy dummies, the president of the United States has to take these guns off of us." They was going to disarm two military police.

MB: Were you at that dance?

Joe: Hell yes! Everybody's at that dance. Men, women, kids and all. Hell, you bet ya. I was at that dance. I was fifteen years old.

MB: Were there a lot of single girls running around then?

Joe: No, not a hell of a lot. Fact of the matter, here in Jensen in them days, we was kind of short

on she-staff. There was more men than there was girls.

MB: So where did you get your girls?

Joe: Oh, we'd find one. Everybody else would have to take turns on them.

A lot of cowboys in town. We were short of women. We punched quite a few cows, Dennison big outfit. I've seen two big roundups. I've seen lots of one-wagon outfits. I only saw in my life two big roundups.

MB: Which were those?

Joe: One was in 1912 and one was in 1915. There's a Blue Mountain wagon and Seven wagon and a Keystone wagon coming through Blue Mountain there. Maybe there was twenty to twenty-three or -four men with each wagon and 150 head of horses. They camped about a quarter to a half mile apart. They couldn't camp together, they had to camp on the water, but you had to camp apart because you can't put that many horses in ropes. Anytime you get over 150 head of horses in a rope you just can't do it, that's all there is to it. Too many horses they have corralled and they break out and push it over and everything.

They had to keep their cavies and their wagons apart because the cook couldn't take care of that many. That's all there was to it. They rode 'til they scattered their outfit. And in them days, there was no sheep across the Colorado line. That was dead-man's land. Sheep didn't go across there 'til in the 20's after the first world war, after pretty near all the cow outfits went broke. It was all those steers outfits come plumb down Steamboat Springs and over on Snake River. Used this country, used to start the roundup right here at Jensen. You start right east of the river here and then they would work through to Rangely and plumb on through to this side of Craig. When they bunched those cattle there at Cedar Springs, they estimated they had 10,000 head of steers in that roundup. That's a pretty good roundup.

MB: Did you participate in that roundup?

Joe: Oh, hell, yes. I was with them, yes. I was two different years.

MB: Which outfits were you working for?

Joe: Local here.

MB: It's called the local outfit?

Joe: Just riding with the local cowboys. Hell, everybody had cattle that had to go to the roundup to get them out, you know.

MB: Did you have your own?

Joe: No. A.H., Lazy Y's, they was running them, they had a wagon, Blue Mountain wagon. I was

working for a fellow, Frank Bourdette.

MB: Did you ever work for the Snows?

Joe: No. They would hire men, one or two men. Then after the boys got big enough, old Milo, then they usually used to hire an extra man with them.

MB: Did your dad buy this place from Burtons, or did you?

Joe: No, my dad bought it.

MB: Well, this was homesteaded originally.

Joe: Oh, yes.

MB: What do you have here? A quarter section?

Joe: That's all, yes. We sold out three years ago. Me and my other two brothers, they were bachelors, we sold all our range holdings and our cattle. We had pretty extensive range holdings.

MB: Are your brothers still in this country?

Joe: John is. Clyde died two years ago. We had range holdings over the line on Colorado there.